

## Our Team



### Dr. Donna Heinel

Senior Associate Athletic Director  
Associate Professor of Clinical Education  
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Dr. Heinel brings 20 years of experience in collegiate athletics to her work with Clear the Clearinghouse and is dedicated to the success of every high school student athlete who hopes to play college athletics. From her background as a student athlete, coach and administrator at the highest level, Dr. Heinel brings a wealth of knowledge of NCAA legislation and the certification process. As the founder of Clear the Clearinghouse, Dr. Heinel has been assisting high school administrators and counselors on the NCAA process for the last ten years.

#### Experience

- Six year member of the NCAA academic cabinet which developed and implemented the new 2016 eligibility standard
- Four year member of the NCAA student athlete review committee which help define the new standard for nontraditional coursework
- Has successfully written over 50 NCAA initial eligibility waivers over the last twenty years
- Has participated on numerous panels and has presented to a variety of high schools, coaches associations, community colleges and University conferences
- Has written and published research regarding at risk student athletes achieving NCAA initial and continuing eligibility



### Alex Garfio, M.Ed., Ed.D.

Assistant Athletic Director  
Director of Admissions and Initial Eligibility  
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Alex Garfio currently serves as USC's Assistant Athletic Director, overseeing the admissions and initial eligibility process for all of USC's incoming student-athletes. Over the last six years, Garfio has established working relationships with high school student athletes, parents, counselors and support staff to ensure a successful transition into intercollegiate athletics. As a current Ed.D. student at USC, Garfio is currently researching best practices for advising high school student athletes on the college going process. This dissertation will serve as a guide for high school support staff seeking to better advise their student athlete population.

#### Experience

- Over 6 years as USC Assistant AD of NCAA Initial Eligibility
- Has a background as a former NCAA Division 1 athlete and high school coach and teacher
- Has submitted multiple NCAA initial eligibility waivers
- Is experienced in providing district level NCAA presentations, with emphasis on best practices
- Has developed HS student athlete strategic planning initiatives